

the Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH); the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. DASCHLE); and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. BIDEN).

□ 1000

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Dunstan Weston Kamara, Ambassador of Zambia.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 10 o'clock and 5 minutes, a.m., the Assistant to the Sergeant at Arms announced His Excellency H.E. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania.

His Excellency H.E. Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, and stood at the Clerk's desk.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, it is my great privilege and I deem it a high honor and personal pleasure to present to you His Excellency Emil Constantinescu, President of Romania.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
H.E. EMIL CONSTANTINESCU,
PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA

President CONSTANTINESCU. Mr. Speaker, Honorable Senators and Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen: Thank you for your warm welcome.

It is a rare honor to be able to address those who make the laws of the United States, the laws of the country of freedom, and who stand as guardians of fundamental human rights in the United States and all over the world.

Throughout its history, your country has been a beacon of hope for the oppressed and the needy, a source of inspiration for the creative, the courageous and the achieving. It has always been, and may it ever remain, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Romania and the United States have a strong and growing relationship. We are linked to the United States by technology, know-how and capital. We are joined by hundreds of thousands of Romania's sons and daughters, people who came to this country over the years and whose descendants now live in every corner of your magnificent land. But ever more importantly, Romanians have always sent to America their most cherished treasure: Their hopes for freedom.

We call America the Land of Freedom because this has been its guiding

principle, as well as a source of inspiration to other countries around the world. But the term "Land of Freedom" stands also for a virtual community of like-minded and like-hearted people all over the world who believe in the defense of liberty, of human rights, and of human dignity. People of all races and backgrounds and religions are welcomed to join.

Regardless of where they live on the globe, people who believe in freedom are citizens of the virtual Land of Freedom. Since the fall of Communism, its numbers have grown steadily and enthusiastically. Since 1989, 23 million Romanians are among the proudest members.

Your Founding Fathers have written: When a long train of abuses and usurpation evinces a design to reduce people under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. This is what the Romania people have done.

My country threw off the yoke of Communism in 1989, and in 1996, it achieved its first fully democratic transfer of power. As President of a fully democratic Romania, I bring you the greetings and the hopes of my fellow citizens. It is their desire to live in the Land of Freedom alongside you and all other people who value freedom, human rights and human dignity. This desire has brought me to America and to this historic Chamber today.

In the new global order, this Land of Freedom spans the globe from West to East and from North to South.

□ 1015

It is an expansive land of constantly changing landscape and with ever-changing contours. Its elusive borders are defined by each and every individual who is willing to defend liberty, property, and respect the rule of law.

But in such an ever-changing landscape, people need anchors to keep steady and stable in a sea of change. As the messenger of the Romanian people, I am here to tell you that my country can and wants to be exactly that, an anchor of stability in the sometimes storm-ridden sea of southeastern Europe. But for that anchor to keep steady, we need the acknowledgment and support of the United States of America.

We, the people of Romania, think we have earned it. Even as Romania was dragged into World War II by the Nazi regime, 6,000 Romanian citizens joined countless Romanian Americans to serve proudly in the United States Army, seeing action in the Pacific and North Africa. Some of these veterans are here today. On behalf of the Romanian people, I salute you. In defiance of the country's unfortunate war alliance, more than 1,400 American pilots and soldiers were sheltered by the Romanian people, people who refused to see the Americans as enemies, and who insisted on seeing them as defenders of freedom.

During the 1950s and 1960s, hundreds of thousands of my countrymen were being thrown in concentration camps and jails, tortured and killed only because they refused to yield their freedom. Farmers were jailed because they would not allow their land to be confiscated. Priests were tortured when they refused to forsake their beliefs. Intellectuals were sent to camps because they chose to defend freedom and democracy.

In all the eastern and Central European countries, the armed resistance against communism lasted longest in Romania. Romania's freedom fighters were thousands of anti-Communist guerilla fighters who operated in the Carpathian mountains, including one in my childhood village. The last members were not subdued until 1961. The terrible dramas of those death-sunken times, of suffering and humiliation, were, and perhaps still are, sealed off in silence and oblivion. Romanians paid a terrible price for their fierce refusal to surrender their freedom. Romania was subjected to the harshest totalitarian dictatorship in the region: The regime of the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

And yet, in 1989, Romanians summoned the courage to rise up against that dictatorship: Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets, defying Ceausescu's tanks and troops. Bare-chested young people chanted: "We shall die, but we shall be free". Over 12,000 of them paid dearly with their lives, and thousands more were injured during the anti-Communist revolution in Romania, the only country in central and Eastern Europe to have paid in blood the price of its freedom. Please allow me here, in this temple of democracy and of freedom, to pay homage to all the Romanians, known or unknown, who have suffered and died for liberty, and, indeed, to all people who fight in its cause, anywhere in the world.

I am here today as the representative of a free, Democratic and proud Romania. I am here to tell you that you may always count on us to be vigilant guardians of the Democratic values we share with you, the values we have fought so hard to regain.

But it is not enough to have freedom. Freedom must be maintained and defended on a constant basis. I feel the best way to meet this challenge is by working together in cooperative partnerships with other nations. For I think that all of those who believe in freedom ought to have the means to defend their beliefs, together. Romania was the first country to join the United States in its Partnership For Peace, and my fellow citizens have now invested their hopes in one day joining an expanded NATO.

Some of you have strongly supported the enlargement of NATO to include Romania. For that we are grateful. Others have a less positive view, especially of a so-called "second wave" of expansion. I respect your right to differ. But as the first Central European

head of state to address you since the congressional debate over NATO expansion, I want to say how deeply I admire the role of the United States Congress in making this historic decision. The expansion of NATO is a visionary undertaking, a milestone in the history of Europe and the world.

I hope you see it in the same way. As a geologist, I have learned that, while painfully climbing a mountain peak, without being able to see it from afar, you might fail to grasp its greatness. As a president, I have noticed that many a time debates and arguments prevent us from spotting, in a storm of events, the ones which will defy eternity. As an ordinary person who thinks about his fate, as well as the fate of his people and the Eastern European peoples, I have understood the tremendous force of an idea at work.

For more than 1,000 years, the borders of Europe have been drawn or changed by war, dictate or external pressure. Since the Second World War, NATO has succeeded in maintaining peace in, and for, Western Europe, and fostering well-being and progress in the nations that share its mission. At the same time, in Europe's Communist east, old conflicts laid frozen while new ones kept emerging. When the Berlin Wall collapsed at last, the peoples of the east won their freedom, but not the ability to put it to use together.

In this new and traumatic historical adventure, transition from totalitarian regimes to democracy and from centrally planned economies to a market economy, the idea of joining NATO did not merely grow out of a need to be a part of a defensive military alliance. As a vector of a set of fundamental values of modern civilization, it has become the supreme expression capable of harnessing the major goal of human solidarity. Issues that had seemed impossible to solve, both within and between the various Eastern European countries, can now find a solution through joint Democratic exercise that has replaced the harsh logic of confrontation by dialogue and cooperation.

Let us imagine for just one moment the European stage after the fall of communism, had NATO gotten frozen in its original project, leaving the east of Europe prey to violence and chaos. What would there have been left of Eastern Europe, save for ruins, and how long would it have lasted before Western Europe and then maybe the United States itself had lapsed into the grip of antagonisms?

Now that freedom has come to the people of Eastern Europe, we aspire to take the next step and join a community of nations bound together by freedom, human dignity and prosperity. We welcome the chance to share our part of the burden of securing a peaceful future for all of Europe. But to do that, we need your help.

In many ways this moment is as crucial to the future of Europe as were the years after World War II that first gave

birth to NATO itself. Your country undertook, with great wisdom and vision, the responsibility of world balance and world peace. We urge you to do so again. Romania does not seek to add to this historic burden, but to share it, modestly, yet reliably, as a trusted ally and friend. In order to build a fully prosperous, Democratic and stable Europe, one that stretches from the Atlantic to the Urals and beyond, the United States needs to anchor its policies to countries on Europe's southeastern flank that share its Democratic ideas and its commitment to the region's stability.

Romania is such a country. I would even go so far as to say that Romania is a key to stability in the southern part of Europe. It is a bold statement, I know, but one that is supported by three important factors.

First, Romania is the second largest country in the region and centrally located in a place of strategic importance to the security of the entire area. We are truly a crossroads for many diverse cultures and civilizations, western secular, Southern Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Muslim. Many observers have said conflicts seem almost inevitable, given Romania's ethnic patchwork and complex border situation.

Still, we have managed to avoid conflict, both within and along our borders, and to successfully find political solutions to all potentially divisive ethnic and external issues. Today, for example, the Hungarian ethnic minority is part of the governing majority. The sensitive issues of the relations with the Republic of Moldova and the Ukraine have been resolved without tension. Religious minorities are developing an increasing dialogue with the Orthodox majority. Romania's social peace is proof that when a democracy is firmly rooted, its institutions can weather the storms of social reform.

□ 1030

So the strength of our internal democracy is the first reason we are so important to regional stability.

Second, we have strong diplomatic and political ties with all countries in the area. For example, through goodwill and constant effort on the part of both countries, Romania has reached an historic agreement with Hungary to bring long-sought reconciliation between our two nations. The strength of this grassroots reconciliation has been successfully tested many times this past year. Recently, both our Hungarian minority and all Romanians were able to freely and peaceably commemorate the historic events of the 1848 democratic revolutions, when our two countries unfortunately fought against one another. We have concluded a sound treaty with the Ukraine, which provides for the mutual protection of our ethnic minorities and starts many common projects.

Romania's three-party agreements with Poland and the Ukraine, the

Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, and Bulgaria and Turkey, and soon with Greece and Bulgaria, and Hungary and Austria, as well as the excellent relations with all the Balkan countries, the Baltic States, and, naturally, Russia, are tokens of our contribution to the regional security architecture, in a zone still marked by simmering conflicts.

Third, Romania is a key to stability in the region because it is at the crossroads of the two largest Euro-Asian trade routes known for thousands of years: the East-West one, known as the "the Silk Road," running from China to Spain, and the North-South one, "the Amber Road," from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean Sea. These roads will find a new meaning in the global world of the third millennium. It is particularly the "Silk Road" project, which will tie Japan and China to Central Asia and Caucasian countries, Southeastern and Central Europe to Western Europe, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, that will most likely evolve into the biggest challenge of the early third millennium. Last week, I met with the presidents of Azerbaijan and Georgia to discuss the role our countries can play in securing the central tier of this vast trading route.

United States participation in this great effort is crucial. Not only does the United States lend tremendous credibility to such an undertaking, but it also helps ensure that future trade will be conducted in a stable region secured by open and cooperative Democratic structures. Ethnic conflict arises because of a major deficit of democracy, invariably triggered in our part of the world by the representatives of the old Communist structures, unwilling or unable to fit in the new context and to give up former privileges. Indeed, national-communism is not a residue but the ultimate expression of communism itself, with all its stock of hatred, grafted on the demons of chauvinistic nationalism. One of the admirable gestures of American democracy lies in its assuming, alongside Europe, moral responsibility for the Holocaust. Meditating upon this example helps us understand that we all have the inescapable duty to be alert to any chauvinistic, anti-Semitic and aggressive deviation. Because aggressive hatred is like plague; it may recur anytime. It is in Romania's interest to contribute to Southeastern Europe's becoming a region where different modern, open societies coexist peacefully, a region where democracy, tolerance, freedom and human rights are at home. I believe this to be in America's interest as well.

I would like to relate to you what Romanian opinion polls have repeatedly shown for the last several years, namely, that the Romanian people consider the United States to be our most reliable partner. There is, between our people, an underlying closeness of our souls. One sign of this, I believe, was the outpouring of enthusiasm that welcomed President Clinton to Bucharest

last summer. Another more fundamental sign is the ongoing effort to build the closest possible strategic partnership between our country and the United States.

Romania is fully committed to forming and nurturing this special partnership. Democracy can only flourish in Romania and we can only become a more positive influence in the region if our role as a stabilizing force is acknowledged and supported by the United States and its allies. Romania is living proof that Eastern and Southeastern Europe are not doomed to a life of conflict. But we all have the duty to be on guard against hatred in any form.

Over the past year, Romania has proved that the occasional political storm matters less than having a sound political foundation that allows us to weather those storms. We have also learned that despite our profound and unflinching commitment to privatization and economic reform, it will be more difficult to rebuild the Romanian economy than we or our friends expected. We understand the need to balance our eagerness for speedy reform with the need to maintain social stability. We have been able to do this so far. Again, this is a tribute to our democratic institutions and the commitment of our people to those institutions. The next step is to speed up privatization while maintaining our social equilibrium.

All of these efforts, building the society, consolidating democratic institutions, reforming the economy, our contribution to the security of Eastern Europe would be more difficult without your assistance. But I can assure you they are well worth your efforts, as they do so much to advance peace and stability in such a vital part of the world.

As a representative of the American people, I want to thank you on behalf of my country for the friendship and help the United States has shown us.

The land of freedom, the land I spoke about a few minutes ago, is a unique place. It belongs to those who are willing to sacrifice for its attainment and its defense. It is a land your Founding Fathers conceived and the one envisioned by our own patriotic thinkers and fighters. It is the land of your brave military men and women, as it is the land of Romania's soldiers who volunteered to go to Albania, Angola, the Persian Gulf and Bosnia, in any country where peace is under attack. It is our challenge together, as allies and partners, to build the bridges to the next millennium from the Danube to the Potomac, from the Black Sea to the Pacific Ocean and beyond, wherever people believe in and fight for freedom.

I would like to close with a true story. One hundred and fifty years ago, a young Romanian who had fought for freedom in the 1848 revolution emigrated to America. His name was George Pomutz, which in Romanian

means "little tree." Once on American soil, he volunteered for Lincoln's Army and fought in some of the key battles of the Civil War, including Vicksburg and Atlanta. Our "little tree" went on to become a general in your Army and later an American diplomat, serving in Russia, where he helped negotiate the American purchase of Alaska. In 1944, long after his death, the Romanian community in the United States donated money to build a battleship, named for Romanian-American General George Pomutz. The ship named for the "little tree" served in peace and war, always a symbol of strength and vigilance. Over the decades, Pomutz' story attests to the common roots shared by our two people, the closeness of their souls, their love of freedom and their willingness to fight in its defense.

God bless America. God bless Romania. God bless the land of freedom.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 46 minutes a.m.) the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess until 11:15 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EWING) at 11 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nevada?

There was no objection.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3156. An act to present a congressional gold medal to Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2870. An act to amend the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to facilitate protection

of tropical forests through debt reduction with developing countries with tropical forests.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 2282) "An act to amend the Arms Export Control Act, and for other purposes."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 1-minute speeches on each side.

THE BEANIE BABY CAPERGATE

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the President and his entourage just recently returned from a 9-day, taxpayer-paid, \$50 million trip to China. It appears that America's tough-talking trade representative, Charlene Barshefsky, has shunned and even ignored American trade law. My word, Mr. Speaker, we now have the Barshefsky Beanie Baby Capergate.

Apparently, the President's trade rep, who is supposed to know, who is supposed to understand, who is supposed to follow trade laws, was caught red-handed in China's unregulated back-alley Beanie-Baby black market. Barshefsky illegally acquired a boatload of Beanie Babies while in Beijing and tried to bring them back to the United States.

"Whoa, not so fast," said the U.S. Customs, since it is illegal to purchase these toys in China.

Well, what is next? I hope the Clinton Administration does not think that this is an even trade for the top-secret missile technology they just gave them. With a \$50 billion U.S. trade deficit, maybe the Chinese were secretly paying off the Clinton Administration with Barshefsky Beanie Babies.

I yield back to the American people any legal Beanie Babies not hiding in the White House.

PATIENT'S BILL OF RIGHTS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, you ask the question, what do the American people want? Well, they want a real Patient's Bill of Rights, not the whiplash health care bill that Speaker GINGRICH and the Republicans want us to buy in. Whiplash? It comes real sharp, and when you get through, it hurts badly.

Our Patient's Bill of Rights guarantees a patient's right to see a specialist when they need to. It emphasizes the patient's and the doctor's rights and relationships. It guarantees that our